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butter *nor* honey" alone says "I do not wish either of them." Even "I do *not* wish *either* butter *or* honey" is not necessarily clear.

Or, then, may properly stand after *not* between members of sentences or clauses, when no ambiguity arises; the conjunction between clauses or sentences must be *nor*. The Pennsylvania Railroad warning should be, "Do not Walk *or* Trespass on the Railroad;" a witness might testify, "The prisoner was not walking on the railroad, *nor* had he apparently any intention of doing so;" while the judge might charge the jury, "*Nor* is there any law by which to punish him, if he did walk on the railroad." And this distinction, if once used by the makers of language, the more intelligent classes of the people who use it, will readily be put into practice.

Hence, this paper; which, if it be charged with wasting time on trifles, may fairly reply, "*Humani nihil a me alienum puto.*"

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#### THE FRENCH HISTORICAL INFINITIVE.—II.

##### IV. USE OF THE HISTORICAL INFINITIVE IN FRENCH.

We shall see this result of our investigation constantly brought into clearer light as we consider the way in which the historical infinitive is employed in French from the fourteenth century down.

First of all it must be said that, taking the literature as a whole, our infinitive is of rare occurrence. In many authors not a single instance of it can be found. Hardly any cases occur in the fourteenth century. Not one is to be found in FROISSART'S 'Chronique.'

In 'Le Ménagier de Paris' (publié par la Société des bibliophiles françois, Paris 1846) we find, p. 115:

Ceste venue fust tantost publiée, et fut la renommée de courir par tout le pais qu'il venait belle vierge extraicte de grant lignage qui devoit estre espouse du Marquis de Saluces.

This case looks like a further development out of the historical infinitive. We shall have occasion to return to it.

The fifteenth century has decidedly more to

offer us. PHILIPPE DE COMMINES, indeed, does not once make use of our infinitive, but on the other hand, in the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,' there are nineteen passages where this construction occurs (see p. 13 of the German edition of this thesis\*). In all these cases the construction is introduced by *et*, and in one very curious case (B. II, N. 76, p. 180) we have *à* used instead of *de*: Si tost qu'il fut logié le bon chevalier tire son las bien fort, et dist bien hault: Ha! ribault prestre, estes-vous tel? Et bon prestre *à* soy retirer.

The evidence of the sixteenth century, the period of the Renaissance when the Latin influence was strongest, is very decidedly favorable to our theory. If the historical infinitive had been imported into French as a bit of foreign elegance, we should find it used by the authors who endeavored to deck out their style with foreign additions. I have been unable to find a single case of our infinitive in JOACHIM DU BELLAY, RONSARD, or AMYOT. Nor is there one instance in the whole of MAROT'S works (see ECKERDT, *Archiv für das Studium der neueren Sprachen*, 1861, p. 196). On the other hand, in RABELAIS there are ten passages where the historical infinitive is used—in one of them without *de*. (See German edition, p. 15.) There is no need of showing that RABELAIS, whose hero gives such a drubbing to the "escholier Limosin" for his Latin-French jargon, writes the language of his day, and does not hunt after foreign expressions.

We have now three facts to consider:

1. The existence of two thirteenth century cases of the historical infinitive.

2. Its frequent occurrence during the fifteenth century in the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,' which were certainly not the work of a grammarian or an improver of language; and during the sixteenth century in RABELAIS, of whom the same thing is true.

3. Its complete absence from the works of the language reformers of the sixteenth century.—These three facts taken together force us to the conclusion that we have here an independent development in French itself.

\**Der historische Infinitiv im Französischen.* Inaugural Dissertation zur Erlangung der Doctorwürde von der philosophischen Facultät der Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Berlin. Berlin, Druck von G. Bernstein, 1888. The present articles are an abridgment of the German.

The seventeenth century had a determining influence on the later use of the historical infinitive. Here again it is interesting to note how few authors make use of this expression. It occurs, so far as I know, neither in RACINE, CORNEILLE, BOILEAU, MALHERBE, REGNARD nor LA BRUYÈRE. The famous VAUGELAS, in his 'Remarques sur la langue françoise,' has not a word to say about our infinitive; nay more, in his translation of QUINTUS CURTIUS (Paris, 1659) he translates a series of Latin historical infinitives by the indicative. (B. I, pp. 44 and 45). MÉNAGE, too, in his 'Observations sur la langue françoise,' is silent concerning our infinitive, although it would have been easy for him to mention it either under "Narration historique," p. 457, or under "commencer," p. 424.

MOLIÈRE uses our infinitive once only. In "Festin de Pierre," Acte II, Scène 1, he makes a peasant say: Enfin donc, je n'avons pas plutôt eu gagé, que j'avons vu les deux hommes tout à plain, qui nous faisiant signe de les aller querir; et moi de tirer auparavant les enjeux.—Thus, in the eyes of MOLIÈRE, this expression was doubtless a rather low one, which would hardly be used by people of any education.

On the other hand, at the beginning of the century, our infinitive was still in use among cultivated people, as is clear from the following account of its use by CHARLES MAUPAS in his 'Grammaire et syntaxe françoise' (Blois, 1625): Nous usons aussi de l'infinitif non dependant d'un autre verbe, pour signifier une sudaineté et hastiveté d'action. Nous chargeons brusquement l'ennemi, et luy de reculer et nous de le poursuivre. On s'en sert assez en la langue latine. Nous mettons ordinairement la conjonction Et devant puis la proposition (sic!) De avec un nominatif interposé, ainsi. Il estoit yvre et se laissa tomber, et chacun de rire. P. 325.

PIERRE DE LARIVEZ, who died about 1611, uses the historical infinitive only once: "Le Morfondu," III 3, p. 339.

We now come to LA FONTAINE, whose use of the historical infinitive has had an all-important influence on the destinies of this construction. It occurs in twenty-four passages of the 'Fables' (see German edition, p. 18),

and is also frequently to be met with in the 'Contes et Nouvelles.' According to LA FONTAINE's usage, a *de* must always precede the infinitive; the clause is generally connected by an *et*, or by some other conjunction, with what precedes. The subject is in the nominative and can only be understood in cases where it is the same as that of the preceding clause and therefore easy to supply.

During the eighteenth century the historical infinitive seems to have been used very seldom. LITTRÉ has only one case from J. J. ROUSSEAU, and all the French grammars published during this period which I have been able to consult, are silent on this point. Even the celebrated ABBÉ D'OLIVET, in his 'Remarques sur la langue françoise,' says nothing.

If we consider the French of the present century, we find again that as a whole the historical infinitive is seldom used. Every educated Frenchman is of course familiar with it through LA FONTAINE, and yet it scarcely ever occurs in the conversation of cultivated people, and there are many writers who never use it. For instance, I doubt very much whether it can be found in the works of CHATEAUBRIAND, VICTOR HUGO, or ALPHONSE DAUDET. (See, however, German edition, p. 27.) Its use at the present day has something stilted and at the same time very nearly trivial about it; and it is avoided by good writers, as it seems to me, because they see no reason why they should employ a somewhat unusual expression, which does not recommend itself by its power to excite the imagination of the reader. It is hardly fitting for solemn or lofty writing, its only sponsor among the classics of the seventeenth century being the careless LA FONTAINE. It is found mostly in narrative, to produce a sort of artificial liveliness: Alors les suppositions d'avoir beau jeu: "L'armée du Havre fait une sortie, les Prussiens ont été battus." LUDOVIC HALÉVY, 'L'Invasion,' Paris, 1885.

All this leads to the conclusion that the historical infinitive was one of those obsolescent and popular modes of speech of which LA FONTAINE was especially fond, and that its present use in literature is mainly due to his influence. He saved for literature and in a sense brought back into the world of books

a mode of expression which had hitherto found but very scant acceptance from the learned. For the rest, our infinitive still exists in popular speech, as is shown by a passage in one of GEORGE SAND's letters, in which she reproduces the conversation of a Nohant mason with his fellow workmen: "J'ai jamais tant peiné de ma vie! c'te dame et ce monsieur m'ont fait asseoir sur une chaise; et puis les v'là de causer et de se disputer à chaque air que je leur disais." Correspondance de GEORGE SAND, Lettre cccxxii, B. III, p. 225 (Paris, 1882). Note here *les v'là* instead of *eux*, which we should expect.

#### V. DEVELOPMENT OF THE HISTORICAL INFINITIVE IN OLD FRENCH.

Having now reached the conclusion that the historical infinitive in French was not borrowed from Latin, but must have developed independently in France, we will now try to show how this development took place. For we may be certain that the historical infinitive did not suddenly make its appearance in the style in which we know it now. We must assume that a construction which differs so much from the ordinary build of propositions cannot have been formed all at once. The saying, *natura non facit saltum*, is certainly true as regards syntax. There must exist preparatory forms, as it were, which more nearly correspond to the usual build of sentences in French, and which lead up to this strange construction, this principal clause without a finite verb.

Let us consider now in what connection the historical infinitive was first applied. In RABELAIS and the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles,' it is always used in very animated speech. In both works it is always introduced with *et* or *lors*, and expresses a new action quickly begun. The same may be said of the two cases in Old French. Let us consider a very excited narrator. The events which he describes press so thickly before his consciousness, that he sees them as almost simultaneous, or, at any rate, as a series very closely knit together, and this feeling of his finds some expression in the 'and' which begins each of his principal clauses. Now, just as in a vehement, angry speech which is to urge others to quick action, the speaker resorts

finally to a species of exclamation and calls out "to arms!" "to work!" "to horse!" without having any distinct consciousness of the verb which is understood; so in narration, too, a very eager story-teller may resort to the same means in order to reproduce in all its vigor the scene which is now moving before his inner eye. Such a thing, of course, would only very seldom be met with in literature; very few authors absorb themselves sufficiently in their subject for such a mode of expression to occur to them. Besides, in Modern French, regard for grammatical laws would act as an impediment. Still, a few good instances of this phenomenon occur in RABELAIS:—

Lors Oudart se revestir. Loyre et sa femme prendre leurs beaulx acoustremens, Trudon sonner de sa flutte, battre son tabourin, chascun rire, tous se preparer, *et guanteletz en avant*. B. ii, Le quart livre, Chap. xiv, p. 320.—Frere Jan daubba tant et trestant Rouge muzeau, dours et ventre, braz et iambes, teste et tout, à grands coups, de baston, que je le cuydois mort assommé. Puis luy bailla les vingt es-cus. *Et mon villain debout*, aise comme un Roy ou deux. Les autres disaient . . . B. ii, Le quart livre, Chap. xvi, pp. 328 and 329.— . . . remede n'y a que d'escamper de hait, je dis plutost que ne sont cuictes asperges. *Et l'Asne au trot, à peds, à bonds, à ruades, au gallot, à petarades*. La bergère, voyant l'Asne deslocger dist . . . B. iii, Le cinquieme livre, Chap. vii, p. 32.—Puis furent introduits les empoisonnez, elle leur sonna une autre chanson, *et gens de bout*. Puis les aveugles, les sourds. B. iii, Le cinquieme livre, Chap. xix, p. 73.—A la minuit l'Esclot entroit *et gens debout*: là esmailloient et affiloient leurs rasouers. B. iii, Le cinquieme livre, Chap. xxvi, p. 104.

Here we have exclamations used in narration, and they certainly produce an impression of very great animation. Could not the historical infinitive have been originally an exclamatory expression, which was used in narration?

DIEZ ('Grammatik,' p. 917) speaks of the use of the infinitive with the conjunction *or* and *de*. Cases occur with *or à*.\* This expression does occur in the oldest literature, at

\* PROFESSOR TOBLER kindly called my attention to this expression, and so solved the riddle which seemed to me insoluble.

least F. A. WULFF ('De l'emploi de l'infinitif dans les plus anciens textes français.' Lunds Universitets Års-skrift, Tom XI, 1874) does not record a single case. But in the twelfth century we find it repeatedly. For example:

Or au cerchier par toz ces engles!  
Si lessomes ester ces gengles!  
Qu'ancor est il ceanz, ce cuit.  
Chevalier au Lyon, 1127 (Holland).  
Or dou secorre, por le cors saint Ligier,  
Gaydon, 224.  
Or del secore, franche gent et hardie.  
Raoul de Cambrai, 2370.

(For further examples, see German edition, pp. 23-24).—This expression seems to be closely connected with another one which has already been discussed by PROF. TOBLER, ('Vermischte Beiträge,' p. 18), namely, *n'i a que de*, followed by the infinitive. The finite verb with *ne que*, *ne mes que* is here used, as it seems to me, with a sort of intensive meaning. The phrase means: there remains nothing except from such or such an action—this alone remains to be done,—consolation or safety can only come from such or such an action. The same thing is expressed more completely in a previously quoted passage from RABELAIS: *remede n'y a que d'escamper*; only while RABELAIS uses a definite object in the accusative, in the Old French examples this direct object remains indefinite and is not expressed. Now, suppose such expressions as: *or n'i a que de l'aler*,—*or n'i a que dou bien faire*—in common use, and we can easily see how in a moment of excitement a man might call out to his companions: *or de l'aller*, *or dou bien faire*. It is the same transition which leads from: *courons aux armes! montons à cheval!* to the simplified, *aux armes! à cheval!* In the hurry of the moment only the most essential part of the sentence is spoken, accent and gesture play their part; there can be no doubt as to the relations of persons or time, and the speaker cannot even be said to have a clear idea of the words suppressed.

The other form of the expression with *or à* is doubtless a similarly abbreviated expression. Now, suppose that in a very vivid narration the narrator has reached a point in his story where some new event suddenly occurs, and where the actors in the story would have been likely to make use of some exclamation with *or de*, or *or à*, and what can be more natural than for the narrator to preserve the same ex-

pression, merely adding some designation of the person who is the agent; and will not his story thereby gain in vividness? The conjunction *or*, which seems to be used merely to call the attention of those addressed, as in the Modern French *or ça*, is out of place in closely knit narration, and is replaced by a connecting *lors* or *et*. Where a knight leading his comrades into the fray would have called out: "*Or du battre*," the narrator says: *Et chevalier du battre*. It is exactly the same process which we have in RABELAIS where he uses in narration: *et guantelez en avant*.

This, then, is what we should propose as an explanation of the development of the historical infinitive in French. It seems probable that it was developed in Latin by a similar process, although the proof is more difficult, owing to its early appearance in Latin. F. WULFF, it is true, gives one case (VALERIUS FLACCUS iii, 412) in which the infinitive is used as an imperative in exhortation. *Tu socios adhibere sacris*. But this solitary case appears so late that it looks more like an imitation of the Greek. Still it is *a priori* likely that before the case-ending of the infinitive had lost its force, the infinitive was employed in exclamations and exhortations, and that the historical infinitive was a later development from this imperative infinitive. This probability is considerably strengthened when we consider the use of the dative infinitive as an imperative in Sanskrit. (See WHITNEY'S 'Sanskrit Grammar,' §982 d.)

We have seen above that in one of the cases taken from the Old French—*et cil du grater*—the historical infinitive was still joined with the article. But as the *or de . . . or à . . .* expression disappears already in Middle French, the original meaning of the phrase was very soon forgotten, and, as the noun infinitive came to be used less and less, the article was soon omitted, and we find it only in this one Old French example. Usage seems to have hesitated for some time between *et . . . de . . .* and *et . . . à . . .* as the example with *et . . . à . . .* in the 'Cent Nouvelles nouvelles' would lead us to conclude. On the other hand, the passage quoted above from the 'Ménagier de Paris' shows us an attempt to add a finite verb to the expression, which would indicate that the original meaning had already been forgotten in the fourteenth century. In one place, RABELAIS goes so far as to omit the *de*. But all these variations have been lost, and only the expression with *de* and the infinitive, as it is used by LA FONTAINE, has remained.

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